

**Announcement Title:** NOAA LCDP VI Call for Applications

**Announcement Number:** 11-01-2007 NOAA LCDP VI

**Opening Date:** Thursday; November 1, 2007

**Closing Date:** Friday; November 30, 2007

**Maximum Number of Candidates to be Selected:** 30

**NOAA Leadership Competencies Development Program (LCDP) Overview:**

The LCDP is a competitive, 18-month, intermittent NOAA leadership development program. It provides a series of training and learning experiences for a cadre of NOAA employees who have high potential for assuming greater leadership responsibilities in the agency. The program promotes cross-line, multidisciplinary experiences that broaden participants' understanding of NOAA's strategic vision, mission, and goals, as well as its business processes. The LCDP, a key component of NOAA's Strategic Human Capital Management Plan, is the agency's premier succession planning initiative.

The LCDP is expected to be an important source of candidates for NOAA senior and/or executive level positions. Successful completion of the program, however, does NOT guarantee selection for such jobs, nor is it a substitute for the Department of Commerce Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (DOC SES CDP). LCDP graduates interested in future senior or executive level positions may compete for them under merit promotion procedures when openings occur.

**Eligibility:**

Applications will be accepted from all qualified individuals during the announcement period. Applications must be received online by the closing date.

Applicants must meet the qualification requirements as outlined in this announcement to be considered for selection into the LCDP. An applicant must be a full-time NOAA employee for at least two years as of the closing date of this announcement. Also, an applicant may not be a current participant in any other long-term developmental program (that is, a program lasting 12-months or longer) funded by NOAA or the Department of Commerce.

Applicants must currently be at one of the following grade levels:

- GS/GM-13, GS/GM-14, or GS/GM-15; or
- Pay Band ZA-4, ZA-5, ZP-4, ZP-5, or ZT-5; or
- Commissioned Officer O-4, O-5, or O-6.

**Program Purpose:**

The purpose of the LCDP is to identify and develop potential future senior leaders of NOAA. This is accomplished by:

- Expanding the participant's knowledge and understanding of the corporate NOAA vision, mission, and goals;
- Developing the participant's leadership competencies by providing him or her customized leadership training and professional development opportunities;

- Strengthening the participant's ability to communicate in and across NOAA; and
- Encouraging and fostering the participant's contribution to managing diversity in the workplace.

### **Learning Objectives:**

The learning objectives for the LCDP participant are to:

- Develop a set of core leadership competencies based on NOAA's and the participant's needs;
- Develop a subset of individually selected leadership competencies as determined by a participant's learning goals;
- Gain knowledge of, and experience with, the agency's business processes for creating a corporate NOAA and for working successfully with Congress;
- Gain knowledge of NOAA's current environment and challenges, and the need for working together across organizational lines; and
- Expand the participant's network of professional associates inside and outside of NOAA.

Leadership competencies developed are selected from the Office of Personnel Management's Executive Core Qualifications (OPM's ECQs). Refer to [OPM's ECQs](#) for definitions of ECQs and the related leadership competencies.

### **Benefits to Line/Corporate Offices and Participants:**

#### ***Line/Corporate Office Benefits***

The LCDP provides Line/Corporate Offices with:

- Program participants who can bring new approaches to their permanent positions as well as to their developmental activities;
- Employees who possess exceptional leadership skills;
- Employees capable of assuming broader NOAA leadership roles; and
- Potential candidates for filling critical positions within the organization.

#### ***Participant Benefits***

The LCDP participant has the opportunity to:

- Participate in a formal, NOAA-wide leadership development program with a cross-agency cohort group;
- Perform a variety of developmental activities to further grow his or her NOAA leadership competencies;
- Gain increased visibility within his or her Line/Corporate Office and across NOAA; and
- Achieve enhanced responsibility in his or her current job or in a new position.

LCDP graduates interested in future senior or executive level positions may compete for them under merit promotion procedures when openings occur.

### **Key Developmental Components:**

The LCDP provides the following key developmental components:

- A formal mentoring relationship with a NOAA senior leader who provides guidance throughout the program;
- A pre-program individual 360-degree assessment to determine leadership development needs;
- An Individual Development Plan (IDP) to lay the groundwork and plan how the participant will gain appropriate skills and experience;
- A formal core leadership training program covering a range of subjects and issues facing NOAA leaders;
- A series of career-broadening developmental assignments and activities;
- An opportunity to participate in specific corporate NOAA and Line Office initiatives; and
- A post-program individual 360-degree assessment to determine leadership development progress.

**Program Structure (*Mentors, Formal Core Leadership Training, Developmental Assignments, and Other Developmental Activities*):**

***Mentors***

Each participant is paired with a NOAA mentor (at a GS-15, SES, or equivalent level) who provides advice and evaluates progress throughout the program. In addition, an expert in executive development, currently from the Federal Executive Institute (FEI), facilitates the formal core leadership training and provides coaching and feedback sessions for participants and mentors.

***Formal Core Leadership Training***

Mandatory core leadership training includes a 4-1/2 week split session at the FEI in Charlottesville, Virginia. NOAA-specific customized training, which varies slightly from class to class as needed, emphasizes a range of topics and issues facing today's leaders.

Required training sessions for all LCDP VI participants are as follows:

- April 13-17, 2008.....Orientation at FEI (Sun.-Thurs.)
- April 18, 2008.....Mentor/Mentee Workshop in Silver Spring, MD (Fri.)
- October 19-31, 2008....Leadership Course #1 at FEI (2 weeks, starts Sun. ends Fri.)
- April 19-24, 2009.....Leadership Course #2 at FEI (Sun.-Fri.)
- October 18-22, 2009....Leadership Course #3 at FEI (Sun.-Thurs.)
- October 23, 2009.....Graduation in Silver Spring, MD (Fri.)

LCDP class members are also expected to participate in specific NOAA leadership training sessions conducted outside of FEI [for example, the [NOAA Leadership Seminar](#) and the LCDP Leadership Week in Washington, DC].

***Developmental Assignments***

During the 18-month LCDP program, each participant is expected to be involved in 2 or 3 developmental (rotational) assignments, each lasting from 3 to 4 months. These opportunities may be in other parts of NOAA, the DOC, other agencies, or appropriate public/private sector organizations. At least one of these assignments should be in an NOAA Office outside of the participant's Line/Corporate Office.

***Other Developmental Activities***

Additional leadership development activities are based on a candidate's needs and are documented in his or her IDP. Activities may include, for example, specific NOAA-wide or Line/Corporate Office projects, shadowing higher-level NOAA leaders, readings on leadership development, and other training as appropriate.

### **Role of the Supervisor:**

Supervisor support is critical for success in the LCDP, as full participation in the program requires a significant amount of time away from the home office (see "Program Structure" above for expected time commitments). A participant's supervisor, along with his or her mentor, plays a key role in guiding and supporting the employee in the creation and implementation of the IDP. A statement of supervisory support from an LCDP applicant's immediate supervisor is requested as part of the application process (see "Supervisor Statement" below).

### **Online Application Process and Supervisor Statement:**

#### ***Online Application Process***

Applicants are strongly advised to discuss their interest in applying to the LCDP with their supervisors prior to submitting an application.

To apply, NOAA employees must complete and SUBMIT the online [LCDP VI Online Application Form](#) (active only during the announcement period).

Both an applicant, and his or her supervisor, will be notified by email that the application was SUBMITTED. The email will include instructions requesting the supervisor to complete and email an applicant [Supervisor Statement](#) to [LCDP.ProgramManager@noaa.gov](mailto:LCDP.ProgramManager@noaa.gov) (see "Supervisor Statement" below).

Please note the following important details concerning the online application process:

- Applicants may edit and SAVE a draft version of their application an unlimited number of times;
- Once an application is electronically SUBMITTED, it is finalized and sent to the NOAA Workforce Management Office;
- **Applications must be SUBMITTED online by the close of the application period;**
- Incomplete applications – including applications SAVED but not SUBMITTED – will not be considered;
- An application cannot be changed once it has been SUBMITTED; and
- An applicant may VIEW and PRINT his or her SUBMITTED application until the LCDP VI selections are made.

#### ***Supervisor Statement***

A statement of supervisory support from an LCDP applicant's immediate supervisor is requested as part of the application process. **The [Supervisor Statement](#) is due by close of business, Friday, December 7, 2007 to [LCDP.ProgramManager@noaa.gov](mailto:LCDP.ProgramManager@noaa.gov).** The purpose of this statement is for the supervisor to indicate his or her:

- Assessment of the applicant's qualifications for participation in the LCDP;
- Approval of the time required for the applicant to fully participate in the program; and
- Agreement of the funding required for the applicant to participate in the LCDP (see "Program Funding" below for estimated costs).

The supervisor will be notified by email that the Supervisor Statement was received and the applicant will be copied.

### **Selection Criteria and NOAA Leadership Competencies:**

LCDP selection is based on NOAA's criteria and follows merit principles. These criteria address the applicant's potential for achieving **6 NOAA Leadership Competencies** critical to senior leadership positions within the organization. Each of these competencies must be addressed in writing by an applicant to demonstrate how his or her background, experience, and potential meet these criteria (see "Tips for Writing a Quality Response" below for additional information).

The 6 NOAA Leadership Competencies are:

#### ***Competency 1 – Leads People***

Demonstrates skill or potential for leading people, such as:

- Fosters a culture of teamwork and respect with internal and external customers that improves results and/or achieves goals;
- Resolves conflicts effectively;
- Reflects organizational core values through clear and consistent actions;
- Promotes diversity goals and/or outreach efforts;
- Works effectively in matrix-managed organizations; or
- Leads initiatives across NOAA to identify scientific issues to be researched.

#### ***Competency 2 – Continuous Learner***

Demonstrates skill as a continuous learner, such as:

- Pursues advanced or continuing education;
- Participates in training and developmental opportunities;
- Seeks out projects and/or assignments outside current job responsibilities; or
- Adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information and changing conditions.

#### ***Competency 3 – Business Proficiency***

Demonstrates skill or potential for business proficiency, such as:

- Aligns financial planning with performance goals;
- Ensures procurement and acquisition procedures are properly used;
- Understands budget formulation and execution processes; or
- Plans and integrates new technology proactively to meet organizational and customer needs.

#### ***Competency 4 – Problem Solver***

Demonstrates skill or potential for complex problem solving, such as:

- Anticipates, identifies, and diagnoses barriers to a goal;
- Develops innovative alternatives to existing operations;
- Creates contingency plans to ensure a goal is met;
- Integrates disparate concepts and/or issues; or
- Solves complex research problems at the national or regional level by leading teams and/or building scientific coalitions with universities and other partners.

### ***Competency 5 – Strategic Thinker***

Demonstrates skill or potential for strategic thinking, such as:

- Understands the roles and relationships of a variety of organizational functions and missions;
- Develops strategies for integrating diverse interests of multiple stakeholders;
- Identifies and integrates key political, economic, social, scientific, and technological issues affecting the organization;
- Advocates change to meet anticipated customer demands or to promote the use of new technologies in the office;
- Participates in complex research or operational problems/activities; or
- Develops strategies for approaching or resolving short and long-term problems.

### ***Competency 6 – Communicator***

Demonstrates communication skills, such as:

- Delivers clear and convincing oral presentations to individuals and groups within and outside the office;
- Writes reports and other documents that reflect the position and work of the organization in a clear, convincing and organized manner;
- Establishes and maintains working relationships with internal organizational units;
- Engages in cross-functional activities;
- Develops and enhances alliances with external groups;
- Considers and responds appropriately to the needs, feelings and capabilities of different people in different situations; or
- Gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.

### ***Tips for Writing a Quality Response***

It is highly recommended that applicants follow the "**Challenge-Context-Action-Result**" (CCAR) model in documenting their qualifications under each NOAA Leadership Competency.

Components of the CCAR model are:

- **Challenge** - describe a specific problem or goal;
- **Context** - describe the individuals/groups you worked with and/or the environment in which you worked to tackle a particular challenge;
- **Action** - discuss specific actions you took to address the challenge; and
- **Result** - give specific examples of the results of the actions you took to demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of your leadership skills.

The CCAR is a results-oriented approach that requires applicants to focus on the leadership skills needed to manage programs, processes, and people. This approach provides a more complete picture of each applicant's leadership competencies and what specific role he/she played in an organization's success. The focus is on what the applicant accomplished, not what the organization accomplished.

Candidates may use all of their past experience to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities. This can include professional experience in the public and private sectors as well as volunteer experience, education and training, awards, and other accomplishments.

**Selection Process:**

Applications will be rated and ranked and the best qualified applicants will be interviewed. A candidate's supervisor may be contacted during the selection process to discuss his or her evaluation of the applicant's potential for participation in the LCDP. Final selections will be made by the NOAA Deputy Under Secretary.

Candidates will be notified of their selection, or non-selection, in the LCDP VI class by March 1, 2008. The LCDP VI class will begin in April 2008.

**Program Funding:**

**For clarification on how the LCDP is funded in your office, please contact your [LCDP Line/Corporate Office Coordinator](#).**

The estimated cost of an employee's LCDP participation is twofold:

- The required leadership development training at the Federal Executive Institute (FEI) – a 4-1/2 week split session – is approximately \$19.5K. In addition to the formal training, this cost includes the LCDP orientation and graduation, post-program individual assessment, as well as all lodging and meals at FEI. Travel to and from FEI, however, is not included in this cost.
- Additional costs (estimated at \$10K) are variable and highly dependent upon both the location and the duration of the participant's developmental assignments and the participant's additional training expenses. These costs include:
  - o All participant travel;
  - o Additional training (other than FEI); and
  - o Per diem (lodging and meals) associated with developmental assignments and additional training (other than FEI).

**Additional Information:**

For questions, please contact your [LCDP Line/Corporate Office Coordinator](#).

The NOAA LCDP does not discriminate in selection on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, membership in an employee organization, or other non-merit factor.